

EDITORIAL

Time to revisit innovative camp options for the streets

Camping is a necessary evil for people experiencing homelessness and poverty throughout the city. It's not a substitute for adequate housing.

The City of Portland is faced with a series of unusual circumstances related to people sleeping outdoors. Occupy Portland has taken over two city blocks using its First Amendment rights to protest a myriad of issues facing our city and nation — including some of the very issues the group itself is facing — mental health, homelessness and poverty.

At the same time, a group of 70 people experiencing homelessness have taken root on NW Fourth Avenue and Burnside. Concerning camping and orderly conduct, the group on Burnside is more seasoned on how to run a camp and has created strict

**No amount of camping guidelines or pilot programs will replace having a safe and stable home. Housing is about opportunity. It's about being able to create healthy living environments for all Portlanders.**

guidelines determining whether or not individuals are allowed to stay on the property.

All of this happens while a backdrop of more than 1,700 individuals sleep outdoors in the Portland area without adequate shelter or housing. Once again, the issue of camping, or having a safe night's sleep, has arrived

on the doorstep of Portland's City Hall.

For nearly 20 years, homeless advocates, business interests and City Hall have all worked together and battled it out on how best to deal with people on the streets concerning public and private space. It's not altogether the city's fault for the circumstances it finds itself in. Billions of dollars in federal cuts to housing and homeless services have battered local governments from being able to solve the issue of homelessness. It's also not lost on us that many of the very same reasons Occupy Portland is protesting — foreclosures, bank bailouts, corporate welfare and other issues — are also tied to broken federal policies that are crippling the American people.

It's time for a change, if even a minor change in the way we deal with people sleeping outdoors. Long after the Occupy Portland group packs up, be it next week or next year, thousands of people will remain on our streets, needing a place to sleep and simply *be*.

Street Roots recommends revisiting the idea of letting churches and private property owners allow people to camp on church property in small groups. We also support the idea of an organized group of people on the streets, like Right 2 Dream Too, to be able to practice their civil rights alongside others.

It's time that the city created camping guidelines that gave the Portland Police Bureau and other law enforcement agencies — along with people on the streets — clear directives about what is allowed and what isn't concerning sleeping outdoors without a home.

Clearly, no amount of camping guidelines or pilot programs will replace having a safe and stable home. Housing is about opportunity. It's about being able to create healthy living environments for all Portlanders. It's about doing the right thing and being fiscally responsible. Creating change around how we work with people on the streets is the first step in making a safer city for all.

Keeping a healthy voice in the community

Street Roots is proud partners with the Willamette Week Give!Guide and 100 Portland nonprofits working to make the world we live in a better place. From now until the end of the year, a donation at the Give!Guide means



Israel Bayer is the executive director of Street Roots. You can reach him at israel@streetroots.org

DIRECTOR'S DESK

By Israel Bayer

getting some great incentives and helping support Street Roots. (See the back page for more details.)

We can't do it alone. We are living in both inspiring and

difficult times. Local unemployment continues to hover at 10 percent and homelessness is on the rise. Three hundred and 65 days a year Street Roots works to take proactive measures to meet this reality head on.

Like many, we are doing more with less. Still, we're not backing down from the challenges that face our community. On the contrary, we are working through the vendor program, the newspaper and the Rose City Resource to bring solution-based

methods to hundreds of people working to survive and maintain their quality of life.

With your help, we're going to push even harder. In the coming year, we will continue to maintain professional investigative journalism. We will bring issues of poverty to the forefront of our community. We will share the stories of organizations and individuals working to make the region a better place. We will continue to highlight the voices from people who have been battered by the recession. We will work to create solutions on a larger scale in our community, while giving low-income individuals and families a hand up.

Street Roots has built something special. Your support will ensure that Street Roots remains a healthy voice in our community — changing the lives of both individuals and families experiencing poverty and connecting people who want to do something about it. Together, we are making real difference by creating systemic change in our community.

Thank you for your support!

Ode to the Traveler

By Jon Cornelison

Somewhere in the depths of the city,  
Another dead bird lies across a traveler's path.  
People wandering listlessly.  
People loving each other,  
People killing each other.

All varieties of life trying to coexist somewhat,  
All varieties of illicit drugs being taken,  
The A.I. keeps writing laws that the people keep breaking.  
Floating video cameras the size of flies.  
The beast is watching with a million eyes.

Turn your head to the side,  
Put your ear to the ground.  
You'll hear the hum of the earth,  
Sometimes quiet, sometimes loud.  
Like a djembe drum, the beat is slowly building,  
The more you wander, the more it calls your name,  
The wanderlust keeps growing,  
You will never be the same.

Learning to shake off the rust,  
Words like: love, heartbreak, trust.  
You can still conjure up the smells of the fresh night air.  
The stars you grew up under, the trees who told your secrets, the creeks you followed.  
"Never forget," you tell yourself.

Sometimes finding yourself longing for a hermit's life;  
A bit sooner than you expected.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Send letters to the editor to the Street Roots office, 211 NW Davis St., Portland, OR 97209, or e-mail to joanne@streetroots.org.

Our mission

Street Roots creates income opportunities for people experiencing homelessness and poverty by producing a newspaper and other media that are catalysts for individual and social change.

Street Roots publishes every two weeks, launching on Fridays, and is available exclusively through our street vendors or by subscription. We are proud members of the North American Street Newspaper Association and the International Network of Street Papers.

Street Roots  
211 NW Davis St.  
Portland, OR 97209  
503-228-5657  
Fax: 503-227-3117  
www.streetroots.org  
www.streetroots.wordpress.com

Staff

**Executive Director** Israel Bayer  
israel@streetroots.org

**Managing Editor** Joanne Zuhl  
joanne@streetroots.org

**Vendor Coordinator** Becky Mullins  
becky@streetroots.org

**Operations Director** Sarah Beecroft  
**Program Assistant** Cole Merkel  
cole@streetroots.org

**Grant Writer** Sarah Cloud

**Accountant** Heather Stadick

**Reporters** Amanda Waldroupe, Stacy Brownhill, Jake Thomas

**Photographers** Leah Nash, Ken Hawkins, Jennifer Jansons, John Ryan Brubaker

**Intern** Liz Fostere

Board of Directors

Bruce Anderson (Chairman), Michael Anderson (Vice-chairman), Heather Stadick (Treasurer), Eddy Barbosa (Secretary), Rich Rodgers, Brad Taylor, Leo Rhodes, Ken Hawkins

Volunteers

Christine Gadeholt, Mary Pacios, Leo Rhodes, Jan Bayer, Eliese Baker, Sue Zalokar, Tave Drake, Michael Moore

Street Roots Rose City Resource

Street Roots publishes the Rose City Resource, a comprehensive booklet of services for people experiencing homelessness and poverty. To inquire about getting an order of the Rose City Resource for distribution, please write to pdxrosecityresource@gmail.com. Resources are also available online at www.rosecityresource.org.

Vendors

Street Roots vendors buy the newspapers for 25 cents each and sell them for \$1, keeping the 75 cents in profit for themselves. In order to keep the cost low to our vendors, we receive additional support from donations and in-kind contributions.



**75¢**  
goes directly to the vendor who sold you the paper

**25¢**  
goes toward printing costs

Vendor orientations are at 1 p.m. every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at the Street Roots office.